United Nations A/67/143

General Assembly

Distr.: General
16 July 2012

Original: English

Sixty-seventh session

Request for the inclusion of an item in the provisional agenda of the sixty-seventh session

People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model

Letter dated 13 July 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Pursuant to rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I have the honour to request the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the sixty-seventh session of the Assembly of an item entitled "People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum in support of the above request (see annex) is forwarded herewith, while the draft resolution is being sent in due course.

I have the honour to request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

I have also the honour to request that the item be included as an item for consideration in plenary meetings during the sixty-seventh session.

(*Signed*) A. K. Abdul **Momen**

12-42361 (E) 180712

Please recycle

Annex

Explanatory memorandum

Background

In order for peace to be sustainable, all members of society must be empowered, engaged in the development process and allowed to fulfil their potential. Peace is not just the absence of war. Lasting peace requires opportunity and participation. Job creation, equality, more inclusive, equitable sustained growth, and mitigating deprivation through social protection programmes are essential in order to ensure sustained peace.

Since the Copenhagen Summit in 1995, the goal of creating "a society for all" has remained elusive. Although there have been some advances since the Copenhagen Summit, societies are still far from being stable, just and equal. Contrary to the principles of social justice, millions of people are unable to meet their basic needs and remain disempowered and voiceless. The systematic exclusion of selected groups and persons from employment opportunities is an impediment to political stability and sustainable peace. Eradicating poverty and hunger, reducing inequality and promoting the active participation of all members of society in social, economic and political life are essential for the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts.

To advance peace and empowerment, political leaders should articulate a clear vision of inclusiveness within the specific context of their society and mobilize collective social will to support this vision. In order to realize this vision, it is necessary to (a) adopt a coherent approach to economic and social policymaking; (b) identify and remove the barriers and obstacles that prevent the economic, social and civic participation of certain social groups and individuals; and (c) frame social policy within a process of participation and accountability.

Memorandum

In a world in which more than 3 billion people suffer from extreme poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy, and millions live in conflict or post-conflict countries and deprivation of their fundamental freedoms and human rights, peace remains as elusive as ever.

Even though the links between peace and development, peace and disarmament and peace and non-violence are well recognized, the fact that the people and their true empowerment must be at the centre of any development efforts that aim at achieving lasting and holistic peace is often overlooked. That peace, as an essential environment in which the full potential and inherent creativity of humankind is realized for the common good of humanity, is often undermined.

Recent political developments around the world have also attested to the fact that democracy and people's empowerment, especially that of women, is a basic precondition for peace, as people's liberty, equality, human rights and development are inextricably linked as essential building blocks for peace. Peace is also a precondition for humane development, a right that is violated by wars, conflicts, terrorism, deprivation or a lack of democracy, justice and equal opportunity. This multi-dimensional, holistic and integrated concept of an innovative "people's empowerment-centric peace model" has been the vision and lifelong mission of the

peacebuilding efforts and peace leadership of Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, quite often referred to as "the daughter of peace and democracy". As a peace thinker and a people's leader Sheikh Hasina has been consciously promoting a multi-dimensional approach and a concept of peace that encompasses innovative peace paradigms championing "people's empowerment" and integrating interlinked and mutually reinforcing elements of peace and empowerment. These include (i) eradicating poverty and hunger; (ii) reducing inequality; (iii) mitigating deprivation; (iv) creating jobs for all; (v) including excluded people; (vi) accelerating human development; and (vii) fighting terrorism of all kinds.

A recipient of the UNESCO Peace Award 1998, Sheikh Hasina's tireless peacebuilding philosophy and efforts include a whole new range of peace reinforcers and multipliers, namely: that peace, democracy and empowerment of the people are inextricably linked; peace is integral to humane development; global peace is the sum total of local and regional peace; peace is impossible without the removal of all sources of repression, inequality and deprivation; peace is impossible without alleviation and eventual eradication of poverty and economic disparity in a world of opulence; peace is impossible without institution-building on human rights, constitutional rights and justice; peace is impossible without true empowerment of women, political, economic and social; peace is impossible without a secular mindset and embracing diversity and multi-ethnicity; peace is impossible without including the marginalized; peace is impossible without job creation; peace is impossible without transparency and accountability of Governments to citizens and a total respect for the rule of law.

Driven by this well-defined peace philosophy Sheikh Hasina throughout her life and her political career and state leadership propagated beliefs such as "all men and women should be treated as being morally and ethically equal", "human capabilities are unlimited" and "unlimited human capabilities can be realized through peace".

In this context, Bangladesh proposes the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly of an item entitled "People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model" pioneered by Sheikh Hasina, a peace thinker and peacebuilder nationally, regionally and globally. Bangladesh seeks the support of all fellow Member States, developing and developed, from the South and the North, to move this innovative peace model into the heart of the United Nations, the General Assembly, for further enriching it with peace thoughts and ideas for the greater and common good of the peoples of the world. This model, an original peacebuilding paradigm by Sheikh Hasina, if emulated globally, especially in developing countries but also in developed societies, will help to reduce inequality, disparity, deprivation and poverty while strengthening global efforts towards humane development and fighting terrorism.

Objectives

This agenda item and its pertinent resolution will focus on the interlinked and mutually reinforcing elements essential for peace and empowerment including eradicating poverty and hunger, reducing inequality, and accelerating social development. The discussion will promote the importance of placing people at the

centre of development and empowering them to pursue a peaceful development course.

Proposed questions to be answered through the agenda item

- New realities including the global crises and climate change present significant barriers to social development and peace. How can the global framework for social development, as defined through international conferences including the World Summit for Social Development and the Millennium Summit, be responsive to these new challenges and continue to aid the international community to achieve its goals of eradicating poverty and hunger, achieving full employment and decent work for all, and attaining social inclusion and sustainable peace?
- How can the international community support national efforts to increase social, civic and economic participation and empowerment?
- Economic policies have often been pursued with little regard for social consequences such as greater levels of inequality and insecurity. There have been limited attempts to make economic growth pro-poor and more inclusive. How can the international community and the United Nations General Assembly address social and economic concerns in a more cohesive and integrated way?
- For most of the developing world, the provision of basic services, including education and health care, is central to advancing social integration and peace. How feasible is it for countries with limited fiscal space to implement a social protection floor?
- While social integration contributes to the peaceful resolution of disputes, successful dispute resolution also strengthens social inclusion. How can the international community strengthen the mutually reinforcing linkages between social integration and peaceful dispute resolution?
- While there is broad agreement that social integration, inclusiveness and equality are important for people-empowered development and sustainable peace, there is less awareness of how these important concepts can and should be measured. What are the existing tools for measuring social integration, inclusiveness and equality and what should be done to improve upon and strengthen measurement of these concepts?